(b) The Council has proposals for establishment of KVKs in the remaining two districts of North Tripura and Dhalai.

(c) The establishment of new KVKs depends on the availability of adequate land and identification of suitable organization. A Site Selection Committee has examined the proposals received from the Government of Tripura for the remaining two districts and assessed the logistics available for establishment of the KVKs during the Tenth Plan.

Agricultural University in Tripura

359. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government are going to set up an Agricultural University in Tripura; and

(b) if so, by when?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The Central Government is not contemplating setting up any Agricultural University in Tripura.

Agricultural performance

360. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that despite all natural advantages, India's productivity of foodgrains per hectare is no more than three-fourth of the world average and less than half of that in agriculturally advanced countries;

(b) whether only five States namely Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, produce more grains than their requirement and more than two-third of the population lives in States that are still food-deficit;

(c) if so, whether Government have made efforts to find the reasons for its poor agricultural performance; and

(d) the action Government proposed to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) The yield varies a great deal from country to country because it depends on a number of factors such as weather, condition of soils, facilities of irrigation, duration of the crop (gestation period between sowing and harvesting), quality of seeds, timely application of quality inputs, managerial skills of farmers and availability of credit etc. The yield rates in India as compared to the international average and a few agriculturally advanced countries in respect of rice, wheat, total pulses and foodgrains are given in the Statement enclosed (*See* below).

(b) The High Level Committee on Long-Term Grain Policy constituted under the Department of Food and Public Distribution in its report (July, 2002) has indicated that during 1999-2000 only Haryana, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh had surplus in rice and wheat, i.e., an excess of net official production over National Sample Survey consumption of rice and wheat. In rice, in addition to the above-mentioned four States, West Bengal also had surplus. The above five surplus States with 37% of population accounted for 61% of total rice and wheat output, of which 36% was surplus over their own consumption.

(c) and (d) In order to improve the performance of the agriculture sector, the Government have taken a number of initiatives such as promotion of watershed development programmes, emphasis on developing and promoting new technologies, measures for increasing availability of agricultural credit, Market Information Network, National Agricultural Insurance Scheme etc. Besides, the Government also encourage farmers to increase production through price policy which includes implementation of Minimum Support Price and Market Intervention Schemes. Apart from these, the Government have also adopted macro-management mode for providing assistance to the States. The Macro-Management Scheme integrates 27 schemes into one for supplementing and complementing the efforts of State Governments through work plans. This gives flexibility to States to address specific problems faced by them depending on local requirements, avoid overlapping in the contents of different schemes and aim at all-round development of agriculture. These schemes are being continued with a view to improving production and productivity in agriculture in different States/regions in the country. Besides, with a view to pass on the benefit

of declining interest rates to agriculture sector, public sector banks have reduced their lending rates for agriculture to a maximum 9 per cent per annum on crops loans upto a ceiling of Rs. 50,000.

Statement

The yield rates in India as compared to the international average in respect of wheat, rice, total pulses and foodgrains

(Yield in kg./hectare)

	World		China		USA		Russia		India	
Year	1999	2000	1999	2000	1999	2000	1999	2000	1999	2000
Rice	3885	3895	6334	6234	6675	7037	2736	2503	2966	3008
Wheat	2758	2698	3947	3729	2873	2820	1569	1804	2583	2777
Total Pulses	812	770	1472	1477	1981	1879	973	962	628	564
Foodgrains	2878	2819	4831	4792	5674	5810	1442	1595	1976	2026

Starvation deaths

361. DR. AKHILESH DAS : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any reports of starvation deaths from Bihar, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh and other States during the current year;

(b) if so, the details of such reports from different States; and

(c) whether it is a fact that State Governments usually discount starvation deaths and find alibis saying deaths were not due to hunger but due to lack of medical facilities and different ailments like diarrhoea, caused by under nourishment?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (c) No report of starvation deaths has been received in the Ministry of Agriculture from anywhere in the country.